

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-10 (cancelled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): A process of producing an ink wastage absorber, comprising the steps of:

preparing a flexible polyurethane foam by using a foamable raw material containing a polyol, an isocyanate, a catalyst, and a foaming agent;

dipping said flexible polyurethane foam in water in which a denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent is dispersed; and

squeezing water from said flexible polyurethane foam thus treated and then drying said flexible polyurethane foam, to make said denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent adhere on the surface of said soft polyurethane foam.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A process of producing an ink wastage absorber according to claim 11, further comprising the step of compressing said flexible polyurethane foam on which said denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent has impregnated.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A process of producing an ink wastage absorber according to claim 11, wherein said step of dipping said flexible polyurethane foam in water in which a denaturated sodium succinate surface active

agent is dispersed comprises the steps of compressing said flexible polyurethane foam, and dipping said compressed foam thus obtained in water in which a denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent is dispersed.

Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (currently amended): A process of producing an ink wastage absorber according to claim 14 11, wherein said denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent is impregnated in said flexible polyurethane foam in an amount of 1 to 500,000 g per 1 m³ of said polyurethane foam.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A process of producing an ink wastage absorber according to claim 14 11, wherein said denaturated sodium succinate surface active agent is impregnated in said flexible polyurethane foam in an amount of 1,000 to 20,000 g per 1 m³ of said polyurethane foam.

Claim 17 (original): An ink supporter comprising:

an ink permeation member provided at a portion corresponding to a printer head, said ink permeation member being obtained by producing a flexible polyurethane foam by using a foamable raw material containing a polyol, an isocyanate, a catalyst, and a foaming agent, and making said flexible polyurethane foam contain a surface active agent; and

an ink absorbing member being in contact with said ink permeation member, said ink absorbing member being obtained by producing a flexible polyurethane foam by using a foamable raw material containing a polyol, an isocyanate, a

catalyst, and a foaming agent, and thermally compressing said flexible polyurethane foam at a compression magnification of 2 to 20 times by a hot press.

Claim 18 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 17, wherein said ink absorbing member contains a surface active agent.

Claim 19 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 17, wherein the number of cells of said flexible polyurethane foam for forming said ink absorbing member is in a range of 20 pieces/25 mm or more.

Claim 20 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 19, wherein the number of cells of said flexible polyurethane foam for forming said ink absorbing member is in a range of 40 to 150 pieces/25 mm or more.

Claim 21 (original): An ink supporter according to any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein said ink permeation member is produced by preparing a flexible polyurethane foam by using a foamable raw material containing a polyol, an isocyanate, a catalyst, and a foaming agent; dipping said flexible polyurethane foam in water in which a surface active agent is dispersed; and squeezing water from said flexible polyurethane foam thus treated and then drying said flexible polyurethane foam, to make said surface active agent adhere on the surface of said flexible polyurethane foam.

Claim 22 (original): An ink supporter according to any one of claims 17 to 20, said surface active agent is a denaturated sodium succinate.

Claim 23 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 22, wherein the amount of said denaturated sodium succinate adhering on said flexible

polyurethane foam is in a range of 1 to 500,000 g per 1 m³ of said polyurethane foam.

Claim 24 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 22, wherein the amount of said denaturated sodium succinate adhering on said flexible polyurethane foam is in a range of 1,000 to 20,000 g per 1 m³ of said polyurethane foam.

Claim 25 (original): An ink supporter according to any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein said ink absorbing member is formed of a plurality of ink absorbing layers; and

the ink absorbing abilities of said plurality of said ink absorbing layers are set such that said ink absorbing layer located farther from said ink permeation member has a higher ink absorptivity.

Claim 26 (original): An ink supporter according to claim 25, wherein the thermal compression magnifications of said plurality of ink absorbing layers are set such that said ink absorbing layer located farther from said ink permeation member has a higher thermal compression magnification.